ST. STEPHEN CHURCH,

MANAYUNK, PHILADELPHIA.

CORNER OF TERRACE AND HERMIT STS.

"A House of Prayer for All People."

This principle of offering in worship is essential to Christian character, as well as true to our natural relations to God. Its operation will supply all the means required for the support of divine worship, and place in every hand something to be used for God's honor and man's comfort.

I press upon every Christian man and woman the fact that through him and through her, the work of Christ is to be carried on; and that whoever is without a portion in this work is without the assurance of final welcome and reward. The kingdom of God is weak because so many of us withhold the King's tribute; its revenue is insufficient through faithlessness. Therefore, "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase." No matter what portion of earthly goods falls to us, out of it and by it, we should honor God. It is the constant and the indispensable duty of each to do this by an offering of substance; and he who fulfills this duty can enjoy his earthly portion, be it little or be it much, in peace. "Trust in the Lord and be doing good, dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." While we have time let us worship honestly and truly; giving unto the Lord the honor due unto His name, by bringing into His courts systematically and with regularity, the grateful witness of our stewardship.

CHARLES R. BONNELL.

MANAYUNK SENTINEL PRINT.

ST. STEPHEN CHURCH,

Manayunk, Philadelphia.

The revenue of this Church is derived from "Tithes" and "Offerings," which are always due to God, and the presentation of which to Him, is an act of worship.

This Church aims to work up to its income, but would avoid methods foreign to the Kingdom of God, though they promise to increase that income.

The Clergy as stewards of God, collect for Him, not for themselves. They should administer the things of His Kingdom freely, receiving their support out of what is offered to God in worship, "the meat of His House."—Malachi iii, 10.

As the priests under the law, lived of the sacrifices made unto God, *so* the Lord appoints His ministers to live upon what is first offered to Him. I Cor. ix, 13, 14. They are hired and sent by Him, (St. Matt. x, 9, xx, 1,) not by the people, but for them.

St. Stephen Church, Manayunk, was organized upon these truths, and (depending upon Him who established His Kingdom in, but not of, this world) to illustrate them.

Tithes and offerings are received in stationary treasury chests at all times, and not otherwise collected.

The expenses of this Church, carefully estimated, are taken from the weekly offering, and what remains is for the Rector, as provided in the By-Laws.

After the experience of more than a year, under the disadvantages of having to teach "tithes" and "offerings" to those whose tithes and offerings were its support, and of avoiding more popular methods, this parish is thriving and hopeful. God's promises are found as faithful in regard to present support as they can be for future happiness. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

St. Stephen Church, Manayunk, was admitted into union with the Convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania in May 1887, under the following Articles of Association:

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

—OF—

ST. STEPHEN CHURCH,

Manayunk, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, Samuel Rowley, James Burgess, James Berry, James Harper, Albert Wilby, Albert Berry, Park Schofield, William J. Jeffries, Samuel Milligan, George Missimer, and others, citizens of Philadelphia in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, have associated as a congregation in Manayunk, Philadelphia, for the worship of Almighty God, and the obedience of Jesus Christ, under the constitution, and according to the canons, doctrine, discipline and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and in the United States of America, they therefore declare the articles and conditions of their Association to be as follows:

First. The name of the Association or Church shall be, "The Rector and Congregation of St. Stephen Church, Manayunk, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania."

Second. This Church acknowledges the authority of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Pennsylvania and in the United States of America, and adopts the constitution, canons, doctrine, discipline and worship of the same. Any person who disclaims or refuses conformity to the said authority and laws shall be incapable of holding office or trust, in or on behalf of, this Church or Association.

Third. The revenue of this Church shall be, "Tithes and Offerings," which shall be received and applied to the maintenance of Divine Worship, and for providing all things helpful and agreeable thereto, by such religious and devout methods as By-Laws, duly made, shall ordain, and the clear annual income, held by this Association, shall not at any time exceed the amount authorized by the laws of this Commonwealth. Pews and sittings in this Church shall not be rented, sold or chargeable.

Fourth. The Rector of this Church shall be elected by the Congregation, with the advice of the Bishop of the Diocese, in such manner as the By-Laws shall ordain.

Fifth. The Congregation of this Church shall consist of all persons whose names are recorded in the Parish Register, in a list of the families of regular worshipers, which shall be made and kept therein. In this register all official acts of the Rector shall be entered, and the record shall be made by the Rector, or (if the parish be without a Rector) by some one appointed by the Congregation.

Sixth. The Congregation shall choose, on Easter Monday next, ten lay-members of the Church, from the communicants, to assist and further the Rector in the work and extension of the Church. Five of these shall be chosen for one year, and five for two years; and afterwards five shall be elected annually on Easter Monday, to serve for two

years. The persons named in the preamble shall act as the committee of the Congregation or Vestry until Easter Monday next.

Seventh. The Rector shall preside, when present, at the meetings of the Congregation and of the Vestry. If the parish be without a Rector, the Vestry shall obtain the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese, for all new measures or changes.

Eighth. By-Laws, needed to carry on the purposes of the Association, and to promote its order and work, shall be made by the Rector and Vestry.

Ninth. No person shall become Rector, or Assistant Minister of this Church, who is not recognized by the Bishop, or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, as a Clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church in good standing.

Tenth. All the property of this Church shall vest in the Incorporated Board of Trustees of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, to be held in trust for the sole use of "The Rector and Congregation of St. Stephen Church, Manayunk, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania." In case of the dissolution of this Church, the trust shall be held for the use of any future Congregation of members of the Protestant Episcopal Church which may be founded in the same neighborhood.

Eleventh. This Church shall have authority to use a seal, the device of which shall be a Crown upon a Cross, surrounded by the legend, "St. Stephen Church, Manayunk, 1887."

Twelfth. These articles of Association may not be amended nor changed until the proposed changes be submitted to the Convention of the Diocese for approval.

Dated in Manayunk, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, this second day of May, A. D., 1887.

BY-LAWS

—OF—

St. Stephen Church, Manayunk, Phila., Pa.

FIRST. *Of Voters.*—The members of this Congregation who are entitled to vote are such as are of full age, whose names have been recorded as provided in Article V of Association, at least six months prior to the election, and who are qualified to vote in any lawful assembly.

SECOND. *On the Election of a Rector.*—Upon the removal or death of the Rector of the Parish the Vestry shall immediately notify the Bishop of the Diocese, asking for names of suitable persons to be presented to the choice of the Congregation, and no person shall be elected Rector until the Bishop has had opportunity to advise the Vestry or Congregation concerning him, nor unless he be chosen by a majority of all who are entitled to vote.

THIRD. *Of Deputies and Vestry.*—The Congregation may at the annual election on Easter Monday, choose deputies to the Diocesan Convention. If it is not then done, the Vestry shall do it, and Vestrymen shall continue in office until their successors are elected.

FOURTH. *Of Tithes and Offerings.*—Chests shall be conveniently placed in the Church for the reception of tithes and offerings at all times; and what is cast into them shall be brought up to the chancel during the reading of the sentences of the offertory. The tithes shall be for the Rector, and until they exceed eighteen hundred ($1,800) dollars yearly, he shall also receive, up to this sum, whatever remains of the general offerings, after all the expenses of the Church are paid. When the tithes shall exceed eighteen hundred ($1,800) dollars yearly, the excess shall be used as a committee consisting of the Bishop, the Rector, and a layman chosen by the Vestry shall determine.

FIFTH. *Of Wardens.*—The Vestry shall elect one of their number, to act as Executive Officer and Treasurer of the Parish, who shall be called the Church Warden, and the Rector shall choose one of the Vestry to be his aid and counselor, who shall be called the Rector's Warden and he shall preside at Vestry meetings, in the absence of the Rector.

SIXTH. *Change of By-Laws.*—The foregoing By-Laws shall not be changed but by a majority of three-fourths of the voters in the Congregation, with the consent of the Rector.

CHARLES R. BONNELL, Rector.

Attest—ALBERT BERRY, Secretary of Vestry.

MANAYUNK, Philadelphia, 2d May, 1887.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS.

God created the earth and all things in it, and sustains all for His service. The lower creatures fulfil His pleasure, of necessity, but He gives a will to man, that he may render reasonable, and honorable service, from choice. To give something of his own will, man denies himself of it, and sets it apart for God. By this self-denial, he offers worship and homage, which the lower creatures cannot offer. This willing service is most acceptable to God, and He blesses those who render it.

Acts of worship differ, but each should be done in view of pleasing God, who tells us, in His holy word, what is pleasing in His sight. He ordains that the faith which our words declare, our actions should exhibit. Each truth received within, should be known by some outward action. Our faith in the Hearer of prayer, is proved when we pray to Him. Our belief that "the Kingdom of Heaven" is "at hand," is proved when we enter it, looking for instruction and support while obedient to Christ. So faith in Him, as Lord of all, is proved when we honor Him with our substance and with the first fruits of all our increase. We first separate a portion for His honor, and then use the rest with a good conscience. God accepts this as a proof that we desire His blessing.

Three deliberate steps perfect our offerings.

1st.—The good intention and resolution to render acceptable service to God. This is called in Scripture a vow. (Gen. xxviii, 20: Eccles. v, 4.)

2d.—Setting apart and denying ourselves of what we resolve to use for God. This makes it an "offering," "oblation," gift or "sanctified thing." (Ex. xxv, 2. Ps. lxii, 10. St. Matt. v, 23.)

3d.—Bringing the dedicated thing to be used for God's honor. This supplies the meat of God's house. (Ps. xcvi, 8. Mal. iii, 10.)

God promises, "them that honor Me, I will honor." He will bless our substance. (Prov. iii, 9, 10.) Yet every man must offer willingly. (Ex. xxv, 2.) The Scriptures also teach, that God regards the offering of one-tenth of all our increase as especially due to Him. He calls it His tithe or tenth. (Lev. xxvii, 30.) Those who withhold it are said to rob God. (Mal. iii, 8.)

Tithes are offerings, but we speak of tithes and offerings, because. God specially claims tithes. We distinguish between tithes and offerings thus:

Tithes are,

1.—One tenth of our gains which should be returned to God as His special right.

2.—They are our testimony to His sovereignty and constant providence

3.—They are proofs that we accept Christ as our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and they maintain His worship. (Heb. vii, 8.)

Offerings are,

1.—All that we give to God out of our worldly goods after paying "the Lord's tithe."

2.—Love gifts, for increasing faith, hope and charity, for maintaining our sense of God's goodness, and supplying means for relieving want, in Christ's name, and for extending His blessed kingdom upon earth.

"If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them."

THOUGHTS ON TITHES.

Rendering tithes to God is a privilege granted to men, not to rich men, but to all men, because all men require the continuance of God's bounty, and the poor not less than the rich. For a poor man to say that he cannot afford to pay tithes, is to say that he cannot afford to be an honest man, that he cannot afford increase in faith toward God, that he cannot afford to obtain God's blessing on his temporal affairs, that he cannot afford to be delivered from anxiety about himself and his family.

Suppose a poor man and wife were anxiously talking over this matter, and the word of the Lord came to them, as of old, saying: "If you desire it, God will continue to watch over and bless you, give you health and strength to work, provide you with employment, secure you good wages, bestow wisdom in using them and comfort in the enjoyment of what you purchase; but then you must deal honestly with Him, and render to Him His tenth; or if you prefer it, God will leave you to yourselves and permit you to keep all you can obtain without His help; for He does not claim Tithes when He does not give increase." Which offer would the man and his wife think it most profitable to accept?

Again, suppose a poor man oppressed with want and worldly care goes to his deacon for help and to his pastor for comfort. When the former has given him some pecuniary relief, what shall the latter say to him? If he wishes to provide him with a Word that may be as a lamp to his feet and as a star of hope, can he find one more suited to his case than Malachi 3: 10–12? Is there a Bible text more easily obeyed, more pointedly connected with temporal affairs, more positive in its assurance of blessing, more adapted to quicken hope in a man ready to perish through despair?

If a poor man can be taught this truth, and lifted up into the faith and practice of it, it is doing more for his help than the promise of an annuity, for the will or ability of the promiser might fail, but God's providence shall never fail.—*From Tithes and Offerings, by C. W. Boase, Esq.*

CONSIDER WELL

That a man's personal relation to his Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer, should lead him to set aside for God's honor, some portion of whatever he receives; and that a man is as reasonably bound to acknowledge God in things and by things, as with names and words. Therefore, a man's belief is not practical if he fails to set aside for God's honor, some part of his gains.